

Green Off-Site Parking Expected Soon at Denver International

By Rebecca Douglas

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Facts & Figures

Project: Off-airport Parking Facility

Location: Near Denver International Airport

Business Name: Canopy Airport Parking

Appraised Value: \$31.7 million

Projected Annual Revenue: Up to \$19 million (after initial year)

Capacity: 4,300 spaces - 2,700 open, 1,100 covered, 500 indoor valet

Developers: Greenscape Capital Group

Facility Manager: ProPark USA

Construction: May - December 2010

Wind Turbines: Windspire Energy

Solar Arrays: Evergreen Solar

Notable Details: LED lighting, alternative energy sources, green shuttle buses, plug-in stations for electric cars & airline partnership

Passengers flying out of Denver International Airport (DIA) will soon have an eco-friendly off-airport parking option. If all goes as planned, Canopy Airport Parking will open in November or December with 4,300 spaces.

The \$30.9 million facility is a cooperative venture between Greenscape Capital and ProPark America, with Greenscape as majority owner and Propark providing onsite management services.

According to Greenscape, Canopy will be the "world's greenest parking garage" and generate annual sales of up to \$19 million. Annual net operating income of \$5.1 million is projected after the facility's initial year in business.

Airport officials remain confident about the appeal of DIA's own onsite parking options. "We have more than 40,000 spaces at the airport, and they've been 90% full every week for the last few months," reports Jeff Green, DIA's assistant deputy manager of aviation and director of public communication. "It's probably more of a competitive issue for other off-airport parking lots."

On-airport parking ranges from \$3 to \$11 per hour and \$6 to \$27 per day. DIA also provides a free 45-minute cell phone lot. Canopy's rates will be \$9 per day for uncovered economy parking, \$14 per day for outdoor covered parking and \$18 per day for valet parking in an indoor, climate-controlled section. Across the street from Canopy, USAirport Parking provides uncovered parking for \$2 per hour or \$9 per day and outdoor covered parking for \$3 per hour or \$14 per day.

Green by Design

Greenscape employed a variety of strategies to make Canopy green - from harnessing renewable energy sources to purchasing shuttle buses powered by bio-diesel, compressed natural gas and hybrid technologies.

Five onsite wind turbines capitalize on the area's flat geography, while pole-mounted solar panels take advantage of Denver's high altitude and sunny summers. The softness of local soil reportedly made drilling seven 300-foot geothermal boreholes a snap. The temperature of the facility's indoor areas will be controlled exclusively with geothermal heating and cooling.

Combined, the three alternative energy systems are initially expected to provide up to half of the facility's energy needs, reports Joel Dumaresq, a partner at Greenscape.

Low voltage LED lighting was installed not only for its energy-saving capabilities but also its lack of mercury or lead. Because lighting is often a main operating expense for parking facilities, Greenscape may have found a competitive edge in LEDs.

Porous pavement was used for the 25-acre outdoor lot to help manage runoff from rain and melting snow, and to reduce the chemicals entering the local water stream. Asphalt for the project was made from recycled roof shingles.



Steel for covered parking structure made from 35% recycled cars.

When considered en masse, Greenscape expects the facility's environmental features to secure it gold certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Environmental Evangelism

Other components of the facility were designed to improve customers' habits. By posting almost 100 recycling bins throughout 36 acres of parking areas, Canopy hopes to encourage recycling from even the farthest outdoor parking space. Onsite tire inflation stations were included to help combat the inefficiencies of vehicles with inadequately inflated tires. According to

the U.S. Energy Department, drivers can improve their gas mileage by up to 3.3% by keeping tires inflated to the proper pressure. Under-inflated tires, it notes, can lower gas mileage by 0.3% for every pound per square inch drop in pressure of all four tires. In addition to providing free air pumps, Canopy will display information that stresses the importance of checking tire pressure at least once a month.

Canopy also hopes to help speed the adoption and deployment of electric vehicles by providing Juice Bars - charging stations co-created by BMW Group DesignworksUSA that provide customers with free power for their electric and hybrid cars. Because the stations are powered by Canopy's solar panels, ProPark's chief development officer Tom Bechard likes to say that customers who use the Juice Bars "literally drive home on Colorado sunshine."

"There aren't that many plug-in cars right now," acknowledges Canopy's marketing manager, Karl Kelman. "But all the major manufacturers will be rolling out new models soon, and we'll be ready to accommodate them because our free Juice Bars will already be up and running."



Beyond the Green

Not all of Canopy's features relate to environmental causes. The new facility, notes Kelman, is the only location in Denver with completely indoor valet service. "You drive into our climate-controlled building, board the bus inside a climate-controlled building and it drops you off for curbside check-in," he explains. "When we pick you up, your car will be already cooled off or warmed up, depending on the season."

The 1,100 self-park covered spaces, Kelman adds, provide vital protection from harsh weather - especially hail. "With 10 acres under one roof and walls on some sides, it's not just carport protection; it's practically indoor parking. The epicenter of hail activity in America is located just northeast of the airport, so we expect the covered parking to be a popular option."

Promotional partnerships with Frontier Airlines will be used to attract even more customers. All Frontier fliers will receive discounts and frequent flier miles for parking at Canopy; upper-tier frequent fliers will receive upgrades and additional perks. The airline, in turn, will promote Canopy as the preferred parking option at DIA via its in-flight magazine and other marketing mechanisms. Frontier accounts for more than 20% of DIA's total enplanements, notes Kelman.

In addition to complimentary coffee, muffins and newspapers, optional for-purchase auto services such as oil changes, car washes and vehicle detailing are also expected to be a big hit.

Canopy is currently investigating the technical requirements for another convenience: allowing customers to pay for parking with the transponders they already use for roadway tolls. Although no agreement has been struck with the local toll authority, Kelman is optimistic about the potential.

More Markets?

Both Greenscape and ProPark are effusive about Canopy's location. "Denver is the perfect city and Colorado the ideal state for launching such a project," explains Greenscape's Dumaresq. "The city and state are renowned for quality of life, attention to the environment and leading-edge solutions.

"(DIA) is also one of the best run and fastest growing airports in the country," he adds. "Each year, the airport expands at a rate that requires thousands of new parking stalls. In addition, the distance between downtown Denver and Denver International Airport ensures that most travelers arrive by personal automobile."

DIA also draws customers from an eight-state area, adds Kelman. "Passengers driving in from that far away aren't usually dropped off by friends," he explains. "They need somewhere to park."

With more than 55,000 on- and off-airport spaces, DIA may be the world's top "parking airport," notes Kelman

Both Greenscape and ProPark, however, are enthusiastic about expanding green parking beyond the Denver market. "This is essentially a demonstration project - a great big practical proof-of-concept," explains Kelman. "It's a great way to show how well it works and how good it looks."

Currently, only 1% to 2% of ProPark's 400+ North American locations are in the airport sector, including facilities near Oakland International Airport in California and Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, CT.

"We see airport parking as a tremendous untapped source of growth for our green-parking business," says Dumaresq.

The companies also hope to apply the concept to university campuses, convention centers, sports venues and other parking-dependent locations.

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